Disposal of confiscated items by customs Authorities

1196. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any specific norms followed by the Customs Department for disposal of items confiscated by it, to ensure maximum possible revenue for Government; if so, what are the details thereof;

(b) whether any nexus between the Customs officials and the local traders has been detected in the matter of disposal of selected confiscated items during the last three years; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken in discouraging the same and ensuring uniform opportunity for all who are desirous to purchase such confiscated goods from the Customs godowns?

THE FINANCE MINISTER (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) to (c) Bulk sale of seized/confiscated consumer goods is made to all Co-operative Societies approved by the Central and State Governments and duly registered under the Co-operative Societies Act and to State Civil Supplies Corporations/State Co-operative Federations for further sale to bonafide consumers through Co-operative Societies, Super Bazars, Sahakari Bhandars, etc. Such goods are also offered for sale to military/police/para-military canteens. A small quantity of consumer goods are also sold in retail through Customs Retail Shops to bonafide consumers. The prices of the above goods are fixed by a Pricing Committee which takes into consideration all relevant factors including country of origin of the goods, their brand name and market situation.

Confiscated consumer goods are not sold in wholesale to local traders.

Goods confiscated by Customs Authorities lying in customs godowns

1197. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that large quantities of valuable items confiscated by the Customs authorities are lying dumped in various Customs depots/godowns;

(b) if so, what are the details of such items which were confiscated by the Customs authorities upto 31st December, 1989 and are at present lying at Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Madras Customs godowns; and

(c) what are the details of measures taken by the Department towards maintenance of the confiscated items in re-disposable condition?

THE FINANCE MINISTER (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) and (b) The value of confiscated valuable items namely gold, silver, diamonds and Precious stones that are lying with the Customs department all over the country including Calcutta, Delhi, Bombay and Madras as on 1-2-1990 are given in the table below:—

(Value : Rs. in '000)

Gold bullion form	Other form	Silver bullion form	Other form	Diamond and precious stones
6,30,297	1,06,322	24,787	2,319	62,534

Figures are provisional.